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Ryuto Shimada, *The Intra-Asian Trade in Japanese Copper by the Dutch East India Company during the Eighteenth Century*. TANAP Monographs on the History of the Asian-European Interaction 4. Leiden and Boston, MA: Brill Academic Publishing, 2006. xvi + 225 pp. ISBN: 90-04-15092-7 (hbk.).

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Moreover, further material evidence rules out other conclusions. Few other spears were thrown, though the British panicked, scrambled the short distance back to their boat, and tried to fire on the Aborigines. If it was an attack, then it was a most desultory effort by a large band of warriors who would all have been carrying many spears and who could use each one with deadly force over 60 yards. The spear that hit Phillip and the wound it created also suggest controlled violence rather than murderous rage. The spear point was not barbed, enabling straightforward removal and a clean wound; the British had on many occasions seen the effects of the barbed killing spears. Finally, post-incident relations appeared to return to a plateau, not without incident, but as though justice had been served.

The book applies this approach to the documents in order to reveal more about relations between Aborigines and the convicts, about Aboriginal gender norms, and attitudes to exploration and labour. In each case, the alternative readings Clendinnen offers are not intended to be incontrovertible; their meaning has been reconstructed rather than observed. But this is the purpose that drives *Dancing with Strangers*, to invite doubt about the coherence of a narrative in which one side is flawlessly comprehensible and the other inscrutable.

However, there is nothing remotely loose about the analysis of the sources. Constantly Clendinnen draws attention to the moves she is making, weighing the characters of her interlocutors and their immediate circumstances as well as their aspirations. She acquaints readers with the literary nuances of the era and the milieu. She allows us to know this world by breathing life into the words. This is a text that undergraduate students of history will find especially rewarding.

Though the book deserves a wide audience, readers familiar with recent Australian debates will likely form a particular understanding of what Clendinnen is attempting. Over the last decade, the country's 'history wars' have revolved around the ultimate meaning of settlement and the national achievement. The early contacts, the so-called frontier history, have been especially contested, with a national debate in which the scale of the violence is hotly disputed. To explain the violence, a few loud but influential voices have argued that there was not as much as had been thought, and where there was violence, indigenous peoples could not have been defending their lands because they had no concepts of territory or ownership. They were simply guerrillas or even terrorists. Such conclusions are drawn from the strictest reading of the historical record, the written accounts of the European settlers and officials.

By finding a tradition of indigenous autonomy within the same documentary record, Clendinnen's invitation is that we move the national memory and conversation out of a deepening rut of incomprehension. She writes that 'by retracing the difficulties in the way of understanding people of a different culture we might grasp how taxing and tense a condition "tolerance" is'.

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EAST ASIA

Ryuto Shimada, *The Intra-Asian Trade in Japanese Copper by the Dutch East India Company during the Eighteenth Century*. TANAP Monographs on the History of the Asian-European Interaction 4. Leiden and Boston, MA: Brill Academic Publishing, 2006. xvi + 225 pp. ISBN: 90-04-15092-7 (hbk.).

Precious metals played an crucial role in lubricating the process of early modern globalization based on merchant capitalism. 'Bullionist' scholars, especially William Atwell, Dennis Flynn, Arturo Giráldez, and other members of the 'California school' of world historians, have studied cycles of silver and gold and the concomittant birth

of globalization. Though not dealing with its more glamorous counterparts (let alone other important non-precious East Asian commodities such as tea or porcelain), Ryuto Shimada's *The Intra-Asian Trade in Japanese Copper by the Dutch East India Company during the Eighteenth Century* nevertheless is an exciting and important book.

Copper was one of the keystones of early modern economies and thus has been the subject of scores of journal articles, as well as part and parcel of monographs by economic historians such as Om Prakash and Kristof Glamann. While the emphasis of Shimada's study is on Japanese copper, its relevance is not mono-regional. By tracking all the end users of Japanese copper, its focus is not just intra-Asian, but ultimately global in scope and would thus be of interest to anyone tracking bullion or currency flows in the early modern era.

The other significant aspect of this book is the very fact that it deals with the eighteenth century. The Dutch East India Company (V.O.C.) made its most significant impact in the seventeenth century, so scholarly focus has until recently been emphatically on that time period. Belatedly inspired by the pioneering activities of J.C. van Leur and others, it is only in the last decade or so, in works such as the edited volume by Leonard Blussé and Femme Gaastra *On the Eighteenth Century as a Category of History* (1998) or Els Jacobs' *Koopman in Azië: De handel van de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie tijdens de 18de eeuw* (2000), that the Company's second century has received more scholarly scrutiny. While copper trade in this time period has been extensively examined by scholars such as Suzuki Yasuko, a monograph devoted to it had until now been lacking.

The book consists of ten chapters arranged thematically, and is copiously illustrated with charts, graphs, maps, and tables. These figures can be quite enlightening, but the reliance on computer-generated graphs can also, at times, make them difficult to read. The introduction is followed a 'Setting of the Scene', in which Chapter 2 outlines the V.O.C. trading routes and markets in Asia. Chapter 3 examines profit and loss by elucidating the complex bookkeeping practices in the V.O.C., which for its clear explanations will be of use to any scholar contemplating research using these resources or attempting to understand the financial situation of the Company in the eighteenth century.

Chapter 4 looks at Japanese copper production, examining mining technology and policy, but only in a fairly cursory, secondary-source based summation. For example, Arai Hakuseki (1657-1725), advisor to shoguns Tokugawa Ienobu (r. 1709-1712) and Ietsugu (1712-1716), was a key figure in the construction and implementation of the very policies for restricting metal bullion exports that form the basis of this book. One would have liked to see more concrete examples taken directly from his writings, which have all been published. Chapter 5 looks at European copper production, making the somewhat 'belaboured' point that in Europe development was capital intensive while in Japan it was labour intensive. Whereas the global market for European copper is examined, the demand for copper within Europe is not taken into consideration. Chapters 6 and 7 are primarily devoted to Japanese copper, focusing on the demand in Asia for copper as currency. Imports of Dutch coins are included in this discussion. While the demand for copper to make bronze is perhaps more important than this chapter would suggest, the regional breakdown of the varying factors influencing demand for Japanese copper as currency in South and Southeast Asia is a fascinating look at the interplay of local disparities.

Chapter 8 offers an overview of V.O.C. trade in Japan and the Japanese economy. Currency, which is very much the focus of the book, was a highly complex issue in early modern Japan, an issue which admittedly has not yet received sufficient research. Nevertheless, it has been explored in, for example, Yoshihara Ken'ichiro's

Edo no Zeni to Shomin no Kurashi [Money and Daily Life in Edo] (2003.) and might better have been incorporated in the explanations of export policy. Chapter 9 provides some of the historiograppical background on the V.O.C. in Japan and outlines the conditions under which it was conducted. The final chapter is a conclusion, summarizing that neither the Japanese nor the V.O.C. were able to provide sufficient quantities of copper to sustain the Asian economy.

One pitfall reviewers frequently fall into is criticizing the author for not writing the book they wanted to read rather than the book the author actually wrote. Nevertheless, the organization of this book seems slightly skewed, because it moves from a broad discussion of copper in Asia to a specific discussion in Japan, instead of first defining the origins and then its outward flow. For anyone familiar with the V.O.C., this schema would not present a problem, but it might be a little difficult to follow for a scholar seeking a comparative perspective. Shimada also seems at times to have an overly constricted view, which would be less of an issue in an article than a monograph. Perhaps some of these were conscious decisions as a way to manage a large topic over a long time period, but one is nevertheless left with some significant questions. For example, how specifically did the decline in copper trade affect the bankruptcy of the V.O.C. in 1799? Similarly, some important resources are left untapped, perhaps because they did not focus on the eighteenth century. Surprisingly, for example, neither *The Door Ajar: Japan's Foreign Trade in the Seventeenth Century.* (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1980) by Robert Leroy Innes, which not only would have provided background on trade, but has a significant section on mining, nor Pieter van Dam's *Beschryvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie* (1701) have been consulted.

None of these weaknesses, however, affect the usefulness of the book as a scholarly resource. Complex economic factors are clearly explained, and the attempt to give a broad, cross-regional perspective is valiant. The extensive presentation of primary source material will make this book an important reference tool and it makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the global eighteenth century.

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Timon Screech, ed., *Japan Extolled and Decried: Carl Peter Thunberg's Travels in Japan, 1775-1776*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2005. 336 pp. ISBN: 0-7007-1719-6 (hbk.); Timon Screech, ed., *Secret Memoirs of the Shoguns: Isaac Titsingh and Japan, 1779-1822*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2005. 288 pp. ISBN: 0-7007-1720-X (hbk.).

The great influence of Engelbert Kaempfer's (1651-1716) epoch-making account of Japan (*Heutiges Japan*), published successively in English, French, Dutch, and German editions, was the result of its richness in factual details, its systematic structure and its lavish illustrations prepared by Johann G. Scheuchzer (1672-1733). In an earlier work, *Amoenitates Exoticae* (1712), Kaempfer laid the foundations for professional studies of Japanese acupuncture, moxibustion, *materia medica*, and, last but not least, botany, a field in which merchants were as much interested as scholars. One might assume that these pioneering contributions would have stimulated an upsurge of similar publications from his successors at the Dutch trading post Dejima (Deshima), but not until eight decades after Kaempfer's time in Japan (1690-1692) did an equally ambitious observer land in Nagasaki eager to supply Europe with an up-to-date description of the country. Carl Peter Thunberg (1743-1828), a disciple of the eminent Carl Linné (Linnaeus), did not stay as long as his predecessor, but by this time, Japanese physicians (*rangakusha* or 'Dutch-learning scholars') had turned